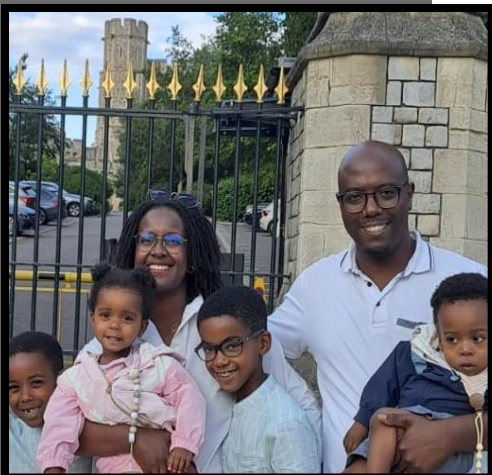




International Lawyer
&
Church Worker

Proposal: Virginia Grögl

Seconder: Adam Isaacs



WILLY JOSEPH BASENGIMANA

Candidate for the House of Laity:
General Synod 2026

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Wezembeek-oppem, Belgium

Tervuren, Belgium

👋 Introduction & Personal Background

Dear Electors,

I am a 33-year-old Christian, happily married to Marie Claire for 10 years, and blessed by God with four beautiful children: Elior-Jason (9), Wilson-Johannes (6), and twins Joel and Joella (2).

Born in **Rwanda**, I grew up in a loving, deeply rooted Anglican family. Before moving to Belgium 15 years ago, I lived in two other East African nations. This journey has given me a profoundly global perspective on the body of Christ.

My early university years in Rwanda shaped me into an intentional follower of Jesus. Experiencing the radical depth of God's love sparked a lifelong passion in me to love Him and His people. For the last 17 years, I have planted, led, and encouraged small-group discipleship programs. For the past 20 years, I have served in various church leadership capacities across different cultures and nations.

🎓 Professional & 🏛️ Church Experience

I bring a unique blend of **rigorous legal training, experience** and **hands-on parish ministry** to the table—skills directly applicable to the legislative and missional work of the General Synod.

- **Legal & Academic Expertise:** I hold an undergraduate law degree from the National University of Rwanda, followed by a second undergraduate law degree, a Master's in Belgian Law, and a Master's in EU and International Law from the *Université Catholique de Louvain*. I spent more than five years working as a lawyer and legal officer for various international organisations.
- **Local Church Leadership:** At St Paul's Tervuren, I have served on the Church Council for the last four years including a couple of years as Council Secretary, and serve as a Director of the Church Trust Fund, giving me strong governance and financial oversight experience. I also serve as a lay leader of worship, and an occasional preacher.
- **Current Ministry:** One year ago, I transitioned my legal skills into full-time church work, taking a career break to join the staff at St Paul's Tervuren, helping them discern and develop a plan to plant and establish a new congregation amongst the many international families living on the eastern edge of Brussels.

Why I am Standing: My Vision for General Synod

My heart is to ensure the future of the Church of England as a vibrant, inclusive, and courageous beacon of hope. I want our Church to be a place where people of all diverse backgrounds receive the Gospel, grow in the love of Jesus, and act as agents of Godly transformation in society.

On the General Synod, I will eagerly champion and contribute to five key areas:

1. Pioneering & Church Planting

Mission requires us to think effectively about new ways to proclaim the Gospel. Having a heart for pioneering, my priority is reaching the unreached in our modern communities through creative church planting and innovative ministries.

2. Lifelong Discipleship

Following Jesus is a lifelong process that requires intentional nourishment. I want to help foster diocesan environments that support structured discipleship across all ages and walks of life, transforming people to love God and others radically.

3. Bridging the Gap for Youth

In an era of unprecedented technological advancement, young people are searching for a deep-rooted faith. Yet, their voices are often lost in the generation gap. I am passionate about bridging this divide—communicating the real, lived experiences of youth in England and Europe directly to the leadership of our Church.

4. Global Mission

My own family's faith is directly linked to the historic Church Mission Society (CMS) roots in Rwanda, which reached my great-grandparents' village. Educated in missionary-founded schools, I have seen how global mission transforms generations. I will bring this deep enthusiasm for cross-cultural and parish-level mission to the wider Church.

5. Social Justice & Care for Creation

Our world faces severe crises: war, mass migration, economic instability, and climate anxiety. These are not just abstract policy points in the *Five Marks of Mission*; they are real-life challenges defining the line between life and death.

- Having witnessed the atrocities of the **Rwandan genocide and its aftermath**, and having walked the path of a **migrant myself**, I refuse to lose hope.
- I want to put my background in **International law** and personal history at the service of the Church, prayerfully guiding how we act as the literal "salt and light" in these complex conversations.

My Commitment to You

Thank you for taking the time to read my address. If you entrust me with your vote, I solemnly commit to:

-  **Prayerfulness:** Remaining deeply devoted to prayerful discernment in all Synod business and voting.
-  **Scriptural Integrity:** Being faithful in upholding and safeguarding the truth of Scripture in all areas of church life.
-  **Missional Focus:** Being a bold voice for global and local mission, championing all *Five Marks of Mission* across the full breadth of the Church of England.

Please consider casting your first-preference vote for me .